# House Education Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2006

## Legislative Action



Rep. Mike Coan, Author of HB 984

House and Senate Members arrived at the State Capitol in sadness this week, having lost a great public servant. Secretary of the Senate, Frank Eldridge passed away over the weekend at the age of 73,

leaving a great void under the Gold Dome.

On Monday, House Members took up

debate on several bills, including HB 728– Mattie's Call Act. This legislation, authored by Rep. Bobby Franklin, establishes a statewide alert system for missing disabled adults. Its

aimed to help protect members of our elderly population that are suffering from developmental impairment or dementia. Tuesday's scheduled legislative day was postponed so that Members of the Legislature could attend the funeral of Coretta Scott King.

The House passed 3 Bills during their time under the Gold Dome on Wednesday. One piece of legislation in particular, HB 954, relates to fraudulently selling public transportation tokens. In an effort of strong bi-partisan support, the measure passed the House unanimously. A rare joint session of

the House and Senate was also held that day. The two Chambers met to pay tribute to Major General William G. Webster, Jr., commanding general of the 3rd Infantry Division and Fort Stewart. Webster thanked the legislature for the beneficial measures they've passed for the military. Lawmakers interrupted the special guest throughout

his address with thunderous applause, showing their support and gratitude.

On Thursday, the House of Representatives continued to show their support to the military— and specifically

to their children. HB 984, authored by Rep. Mike Coan, makes 5 school absences per year excusable for students whose parents are scheduled for or on leave from overseas deployment as part of military service. In another great display of bipartisanship, the bill passed unanimously.

For a complete review of the work undertaken at the Capitol thus far, please view the Daily Legislative Reports under

the Member Services portion of our website.



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### INTERN SPOTLIGHT

If every person took a few moments to look

back over their life they might come to recall one single moment that changed them completely. The one event that shook them to their core and al-

tered their path in life. For me that moment began with this great opportunity at the State Capitol.

My name is La Marcus Lawrence and I am a graduate of Javelin College and will be pursuing a Computer Science Degree from Georgia State Univer-

sity. I am originally from New York and now Georgia is my home. My internship for the General Assembly has truly been a fantastic journey. Being around so many others, like myself, who want to make a difference in so many ways. It's great to be a part of this team, General Assembly. The entire Information **Technology Depart**ment has taken time to make sure that I have what I need to take my career to next plateau.

I am very impressed by the expertise and true professionalism that the IT Department has accomplished. Their philosophy about the importance of creating a successful environment that breeds positive results is one that I share. I appreciate all the moments and opportunities. I will always remember this as I continue my path in life and success. We, the General Assembly, know what success taste like (a can of Coke). Good Luck Everyone!!

Thanks Scott Henry, Mike (boo) Bottoms, Jerry Spann, Kevin Stolls, Bridget Holsey, David Underwood, James McCarthy, and all supporting IT staff. Thank you so much for all of your guidance and for believing in me.

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Don't forget to contact your State Representative for information about serving as a PAGE on the House Floor! This is a terrific way to get a first hand look at the law making process— as well as lend a hand to your state government. Visit our website for full details on how to get involved!!

www.legis.state.ga.us



# Remembering Coretta Scott King



Civil Rights
Champion Coretta
Scott King

Coretta Scott was born in Heiberger, Alabama and raised on the farm of her parents in Perry County, Alabama. At an early age, she learned first hand about the injustices of life in a segregated society. She walked five miles a day to attend the oneroom Crossroad School in Marion, Alabama, while the white students rode buses to an all-white school closer by. Young Coretta excelled at her studies, particularly music, and was valedictorian of her graduating class at Lincoln High School. She graduated in 1945 and received a scholarship to Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio. As an undergraduate, she took an active interest in the nascent civil rights movement; she joined the Antioch chapter of the NAACP, and the college's Race Relations and Civil Liberties Committees. She graduated from Antioch with a B.A. in music and education and won a scholarship to study concert singing at New **England Conservatory of** Music in Boston, Massachu-

In Boston she met a young theology student, Martin Luther King, Jr., and her life was changed forever. They were soon caught up in the dramatic events that triggered the modern civil rights movement. The visibility of Dr. King's leadership attracted fierce opposition from the supporters of insti-

tutionalized racism. In 1956, white supremacists bombed the King family home in Montgomery. Mrs. King and the couple's first child narrowly escaped injury. Although the demands of raising a family had caused Mrs. King to retire from her singing career, she found another way to put her musical background to the service of the cause. She conceived and performed a series of critically acclaimed Freedom Concerts, combining poetry, narration and music to tell the story of the Civil Rights movement. Over the next few years, Mrs. King staged Freedom Concerts in some of America's most distinguished concert venues, as fundraisers for the organization her husband had founded, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

Dr. King's fame spread beyond the United States, and he was increasingly seen not only as a leader of the American civil rights movement, but as the symbol of an international struggle for human liberation from racism, colonialism and all forms of oppression and discrimination. Mrs. King found herself in increasing demand as a public speaker. She became the first woman to deliver the Class Day address at Harvard, and the first woman to preach at a statutory

service at St. Paul's Cathedral in London. She served as a Women's Strike for Peace delegate to the 17-nation Disarmament Conference in Geneva, Switzerland in 1962. Mrs. King became a liaison to international peace and justice organizations even before Dr. King took a public stand in 1967 against United States intervention in the Vietnam War.

On April 4, 1968, Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee. Channeling her grief, Mrs. King concentrated her energies on fulfilling her husband's work by building The Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change as a living memorial to her husband's life and dream. Years of planning, fundraising and lobbying, lay ahead, but Mrs. King would not be deterred, nor did she neglect direct involvement in the causes her husband had championed. In 1969, Coretta Scott King published the first volume of her autobiography, My Life with Martin Luther King Jr. In the 1970s, Mrs. King maintained her husband's commitment to the cause of economic justice. In 1974 she formed the Full Employment Action Council, a broad coalition of over 100 religious, labor, business, civil and women's rights organizations dedicated to a national policy of full ...

#### Coretta Scott King, Continued...

employment and equal economic opportunity..

In 1981, The King Center, the first institution built in memory of an African American leader, opened in Atlanta, Georgia. The Center receives over one million visitors a year, and has trained tens of thousands in Dr. King's philosophy and strategy of nonviolence. Mrs. King continued to serve the cause of justice and human rights; her travels took her throughout the world on goodwill missions to Africa, Latin America, Europe and Asia. In 1983, she marked the 20th Anniversary of the historic March on Washington, by leading a gathering of more than 800 human rights organizations, the Coalition of Conscience, in the largest demonstration the capital city had seen up to that time.

Mrs. King led the successful campaign to establish Dr. King's birthday, January 15, as a national holiday in the United States. By an Act of Congress, the first national observance of the holiday took place in 1986 is now marked by annual celebrations in over 100 countries. Mrs. King was invited by President Clinton to witness the historic handshake between Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Chairman Yassir Arafat at the signing of the Middle East Peace Accords in 1993. In 1985 Mrs. King and three of her children were arrested at the South African embassy in Washington, D.C., for protesting against that

country's apartheid system of racial segregation and disenfranchisement. Ten years later, she stood with Nelson Mandela in Johannesburg when he was sworn in as President of South Africa.

After 27 years at the helm of The King Center, Mrs. King turned over leadership of the Center to her son, Dexter Scott King, in 1995. She remained active in the causes of racial and economic justice, and in her remaining years devoted much of her energy to AIDS education and curbing gun violence. Although she died in 2006 at the age of 78, she remains an inspirational figure to men and women around the world.

#### Higher Education Chairman Bill Hembree

Born in Villa Rica, Georgia, Republican State Representative Bill Hembree went on to see much of the world. The Legislator for the Douglasville area has visited 31 different states and 34 countries! He graduated from Douglas County High School and later trav- the University of Pittsburgh's eled the globe on his quest for knowledge. Having lost his father at the age of 3, Hembree and his 4 older siblings were raised solely by his mother. This caused him to have to really work hard in order to go to college, earning scholarships to a number of places. This hard work kept him motivated to keeping learning more and more.

In 1985, he was a member of the National President Distributive Education Club of America and a part of the Youth for Understanding Exchange Student program. for which he earned a scholarship and spent time in Germany. From 1987-1989, he attended Johnson and Wales College and University in Providence Rhode

Island on a scholarship, earning both his Associates and Bachelor's Degrees and graduating Cum Laude for both. The institution also awarded him the University President's Trophy. Also in 1987, he participated in Shipboard education program. This program allowed Representative Hembree and many other students to travel abroad via ship and see much of the world, doing field studies wherever they docked. He described the experience as the most rewarding and interesting part of his education.

In 1990 he participated in the Master's Program at the University of Glagsgow in Scotland for a year, studying International Finance. At one point, the Representative was fluent in both French and German! The aforementioned academic accolades certainly serve as points of merit for Hembree's recent appointment as Chairman of the

Higher Education Committee, for which he has had an active membership role in for the last 12 years. He is also currently a member of the Appropriations and Intra-governmental Affairs Committees. In 1997 he was appointed to the Atlanta Regional Commission.

Chairman Hembree has been married to his wife. Beth. for 12 years. The couple has twin sons, Thomas and Miles, and an older son, Will Jr. The family regularly attends the First Baptist Church of Douglasville where Hembree teaches Sunday school. His involvement in

other civic duties includes membership in the Chamber of Commerce and National Youth Chairman for the Muscular Dystrophy Association.

